

ORIGINAL SALT

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The Anti-SALT Hawks

As Soviets see U.S. 'apostles of nuclear death'

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Not long ago, the submarine *Ohio* was launched in the U.S. with pomp and ceremony. The ship was officially described as the "most formidable strategic weapon system ever devised," an emphasis, coming at the height of the debate over the SALT II agreement, designed to appease American hawks.

Each of at least seven similar ships to be built will carry 24 Trident II missiles, a first-strike weapon now being developed whose appearance can only heighten the danger of nuclear war. Because of this, the launching was marked by demonstrators demanding that plans for deployment be dropped. The event epitomizes the struggle in the U.S. over SALT II.

The agreement has massive American support. Richard Barnet, a senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, notes that the arms race is making Americans increasingly insecure. For them it is no abstract concept. Hence the scale of the antiwar movement.

But opponents of this movement are well known, if only because they keep themselves in the public eye by their persistent discourses in the media. Their spearhead forces are the Committee on the Present Danger, the American Conservative Union, and the Coalition for Peace Through Strength. The latter in-

cludes 175 Congressmen and eighty-nine conservative organizations and is led by Paul Nitze, who was with the Pentagon for eight years, and Sen. Henry Jackson.

A member of this coterie recently stressed its position, which amounts to this: We are opposed to trusting the Communists and are not prepared to deal with them unless they accept our terms. The proponents of this approach are well paid by the military-industrial complex, for whom the arms race is a source of privilege and profit. The men at its helm fear that a SALT II agreement would cut into the death merchants' profits.

The hawks' strength lies not in numbers but in their positions close to the Government and their unlimited financial resources. The press recently reported that the Government had spent \$600,000 of the taxpayers' money to win support for SALT II. The hawks have allocated millions to block it in the Senate.

The press systematically gives detailed coverage to opponents of SALT, especially their discourses about "undermining the security of the U.S." But SALT supporters get mentioned only rarely, and then obliquely.

The anti-SALT campaign has been proceeding along a variety of lines. Sen. Jackson urges his fellow senators to do everything in their power to "improve" the agreement, to make it unilaterally advantageous to the U.S. Republican Senate Minority Leader Howard Baker

has gone so far as to argue that SALT as proposed would limit America's genius for innovation.

Another favorite theme is the "shift in strategic balance" that would allegedly follow the agreement. A spokesman of the Coalition for Peace Through Strength recently argued that SALT II would "lock the U.S. into strategic inferiority" and would be "a symbol of surrender." Nitze figured that by the end of the term of the agreement the Soviet Union's preponderance in diverse types of armaments would double, treble, or even quadruple. A closer look at such computations invariably reveals that the hawks either unscrupulously manipulate figures or simply invent them.

The hawks do not confine themselves to juggling figures. Their latest thing is the so-called problem of verification. Sen. Jackson sounded the alarm when the Iranian Government removed U.S. monitoring stations from its territory. Without the monitoring stations, he said, the U.S. would be unable to detect violations of the agreement. But the gambit had little effect until the CIA came to the rescue.

After a secret Congressional hearing where the CIA director appeared, Republican Sen. Jake Garn privately told a New York Times reporter that, in the opinion of the CIA chief, effective control would be out of the question for at least another five years. A number of senators and Republican leaders promptly seized upon this, and to refute the contention the Secretary of Defense and then the President made public statements.

In recent weeks the White House and the State Department have given the hawks a hard time, with their broad campaign supporting SALT. The hawks, however, are still at it, pressing for bigger arms programs while conceding the possibility of ratification. American supporters of disarmament know what could happen if the hawks have their way, and are determined to check nuclear death and its apostles in the name of life. ■